

GAMIFICATION | OCTALIS ELEMENTS

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1. Meaning

Epic Meaning: Create a context for the activities within the experience you're gamifying and a storyline that will progress students by piquing their curiosity and make the challenges they need to overcome part of the incentive to progress in order to achieve the goals/win.

Design Strategies

- Consider storytelling techniques using video or text to grab and hold students' attention.
- Use [Cathy Moore's 4-step process for writing scenarios](#)
- Describe the content, activities and assessments in terms of students' larger goals (Learning this will help you do THAT. Completing this activity will give you the feedback you need to progress to the next level.)

Communication Strategies

- Share your stories from the field so students can see what's possible in their future careers when theory is applied.

Technical Strategies

- Use multimedia to communicate the context and meaning as the more senses you engage, the more impact a message can have.

2. Accomplishment

Development and Accomplishment: Help students feel that sense of competence and see their progression. Your LMS may have badges, progress bars or leaderboards. If not, you have other technical and communication strategies you can use.

Design Strategies

- Use rapid feedback tools and techniques to help students self-regulate their learning. See the chapter on online feedback for ideas.

Communication Strategies

- Recognise individuals' participation in forums or outstanding work via the news and announcements forum
- [Effectively weave forum discussion threads](#), naming and faming participants

Technology Strategies

- Use automated systems to send positive emails when individuals complete tasks.
- Use activity completion rules and restrict access settings in your LMS to display labels with messages when activities are completed

3. Empowerment

Empowerment and Creativity: Give students choices and input into how they learn and provide variety in how they respond to learning activities.

Communication Strategies

- In webinars or tutorials, ask students in advance what they want to cover or use a polling tool to let them vote on options
- Online, ask an open-ended question every week regarding what you've covered and address it in your next news/announcements forum post

Design Strategies

- Provide options as to what problem to solve in a learning task.
- Ask for different response modes to learning tasks – an infographic, a video, a learning artefact, a piece of programming, a concept model –

rather than just a short piece of writing. The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework can be helpful to spark ideas here.

- Provide a variety of content types and activities. The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework can be helpful to spark ideas here.
- Design Thinking strategies suggest that creativity can be sparked when you ask for multiple solutions to a problem rather than just one. See the facilitators guide from the [Stanford Design School website](#).

4. Ownership

Ownership and Possession: In games, players can collect armour, pets and weapons. For adults, the ability to contribute to a process or product and feeling that contribution has value can give them a sense of “buy-in”.

Communication Strategies

- Explain the importance of learning together and the strength of a community of learning

Design Strategies

- Use LMS tools like Glossary, Database or Wiki and invite students to co-create a shared resource
- Ask students to teach others about a concept, task, calculation or theme

5. Social Influence

Social Influence and Relatedness: How students relate to each other and to you is a vital component to engagement in any framework.

Communication Strategies

- Providing a strong sense of teacher presence is important to student engagement and retention (Chickering& Gamson, 1987) – particularly in online learning spaces

Design Strategies

- Use a combination of team-based activities and competition to satisfy the socialisers and the competitors
- Use peer review and peer feedback to provide support
- Cycle group/team leadership so that as many students as possible get a turn in different roles
- Use role-playing between students so they can learn with and from each other

Technical Strategies

- Use Groups and Groupings in your LMS to reduce cohort sizes in peer to peer activities

6. Scarcity

Scarcity and Impatience: We want our students to persevere and push themselves. We also want to make them feel supported, so this aspect of gamification can seem counter-intuitive. But consider that learning sprints are a popular way to break through self-efficacy barriers on a number of fronts and timed exercises can help us improve basic recall and coordination challenges. Note: the latter should always be offered as an option as some students may have temporary or permanent physical or cognitive challenges.

Design Strategies

- In face to face or Zoom tutorials, set timed challenges to solve a puzzle, answer a question, come up with a solution, draw a user interface, respond to a role-play scenario
- Invite students to create a video or audio file of a short length to explain a concept, create an elevator pitch or explain a solution to a problem

Technology Strategies

- Use the timed settings on an online quiz to help students to drill on foundation knowledge or respond to asynchronous role plays (video-based or text-based)
- Use PowerPoints auto slide advance feature to create a timer in a workshop when inviting audience participation/creation

7. Unpredictability

Unpredictability and Curiosity: Unlike a game of poker or when exploring a new dungeon – In learning, we want the learning experience to progress logically and be confident of what's coming next (okay, that would be great in poker too). But that doesn't mean we can't pique curiosity or offer some unexpected, positive surprises.

Communication Strategies

- Start your week, topic or video with a provocative or compelling question that you gradually answer.

Design Strategies

- Introduce a mystery to be solved rather than a scenario to work through.
- Add in some twists to an ongoing scenario or problem as the student works through to the solution.

Technology Strategies

- Using the H5P branched scenario or completion rules and restricted access, create a branched learning scenario where students aren't given right/wrong feedback but merely get to see the immediate results of their most recent decisions until the end.

- Use the Feedback tool to get students to submit a solution, then use the customisable completion page at the end of the Feedback tool to provide a model answer and introduce a new twist to a problem.

8. Avoidance

Loss Avoidance: We can't kill students' farm crops or take away virtual currency if they don't log into the course site or attend tutorials. But we can build value propositions for what we'd like them to do that will stir a fear of missing out.

Communication Strategies

- Clearly communicate the benefits students will get from attending a lecture or tutorial, completing a learning task or doing their readings – and how this will help them achieve their Epic Meaning.
- Create clearly articulated rubrics that use objective criteria to describe performance quality.